

Gender Responsive Budgeting Constraints on Equitable Access and Participation in Education in Kenya

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Abstract

The thrust of this study was to examine the gender responsive budgeting constraints on equitable access and participation in education in Kenya. The study was undergirded by the Capital Approach (CA) theoretical framework propounded by economist Sen (1980) and later developed and modified by philosopher Nussbaum (1988). The descriptive survey design was adopted and justified on the grounds of wide utility in educational research. Questionnaires for teachers and interview schedules for education officers were used to collect quantitative and qualitative data, respectively. The study established that the main gender responsive constraints on equitable access and participation in education, in decreasing order of importance were; low premium attached to education, inadequate physical facilities, household poverty, and child-labour and retrogressive socio-cultural practices among some communities, especially pastoralist communities, in Kenya. It was concluded that despite efforts made at national level of governance, concept of gender responsive budgeting has not yielded the required impact. It was recommended that the devolved government at county level of governance should sensitize communities and key policy makers on the need to set a side gender budget to address issues related to equitable educational access and participation in their respective counties.(187 words).

Keywords: gender, gender responsive constraints, equitable, access and participation, education, Kenya.

I. Introduction

1.1 Background to the study

The 21st century is experiencing an accelerating information and knowledge revolution on gender and development (United Nations, 2011, 2012). This is with the understanding that knowledge is crucial for growth and development of economies (Orodho, 2013). The result is new opportunities for females in all phases or stages of development. In fact, during the last two decades, the world development literature has experienced a transition of concerns from economic growth to human development and later gender development. The last two decades of development research was busy in making a link between ends and means of development, bringing gender issues sharply in focus (UNESCO, 2011). The focus was shifted to provide more priority to the ends of gender development rather than means. The neoclassical indicators of economic progress like GNP and GDP failed to reflect the well-being and freedom actually enjoyed by population, and especially the female gender (United Nations, 2011; Republic of Kenya/UNICEF, 2012).

The concept of human development has been accepted in the development economic literature as an expansion of human capabilities, a widening of choices, an enhancement of freedom and a fulfillment of human rights (United Nations, 2012). It defines people's wellbeing as the end of development and economic growth as a means. The construction of HDR by UNDP since 1990 provides a detailed and extensive analysis of achievements and limitations of living condition of people in different parts of the contemporary world. But after the publication HDRs a concern was raised for more comprehensive investigation of gender inequality in economic and social arrangement in the contemporary world. Women and men share many aspects of living together, collaborate with each other in complex and ubiquitous ways, yet end up – often enough – with very different rewards and deprivations (UNESCO, 2010, 2011).

According to Sen (1992), there are two important issues gender and development which need to be addressed carefully. First, gender inequality and its linkage with gender equity sensitive indicators and secondly, contrasts between the efforts and sacrifices made by both male and female and the rewards and benefits they respect enjoyed. Kenya is a country with enormous diversity. It is characterized by huge difference in economics, political, social, cultural and regional aspects. The social status ascribed to women varies from county to county, with some countries in the northern pastoralist part of the country notoriously skewed against females' rights to all rights especially equity in educational access and participation at all tiers of the education system (Abwalaba, 2011; Republic of Kenya, 2012a, 2012b; Orodho, 2014).

The general disparity in gender concerns in Kenya has a historiographical trajectory (Orodho, 2014). During independence in Kenya, the condition of women in terms of literacy, health status was very much appalling. Female literacy rate was less than 1% in some parts of the country during independence (Oketch &

Ngware, 2012; Republic of Kenya 2005a, 2005b). The deprivation of women in getting the similar level of opportunities relating to education, health, decision making as men due to prevalence of patriarchal society and socioeconomic backwardness among some pastoralist communities in Kenya put women at a backstage. During independence the condition of women in terms of literacy, health status was very much appalling (Republic of Kenya/UNICEF, 2012).

The world today requires dynamic minds with new ideas and solutions to cope with the complexity of the economic, demographic, environmental and political transformations it is engaged in. To succeed in the challenging landscape, women and girls' empowerment through education is a necessity. Their talents and leadership are assets that the global economy, politics and society requires for development (UNDP, 2011). It is against this background that this paper was motivated to examine the gender responsive constraints on equitable access and participation in education in Kenya.

1.2 The State of the Art Review

Globally gender responsive budgeting (GRB) has come to light as an important tool in the ongoing struggle to make budgets and policies more gender responsive. From just one country in the mid-1980s to over 90 countries now, the last two decades have witnessed an overwhelming endorsement of GRB as a valuable tool for engendering budgets and policies all over the world. The crux of the matter is to bridge inequalities between men and women. Policies and budgets are brought under scrutiny for their gender response for the purpose of development (ILO, 2006).

A government's real values and priorities are gauged from its budget's statement (Republic of Kenya, 2012). Positive discrimination in favour of the disadvantaged groups would pressurize governments for certain priorities with the purpose of bringing equality to both men and women i.e. such as women's empowerment and rights. However good the policies may be, their implementation makes the difference for it translates them into actual plans which impacts on the lives of the citizens. Many "good" policies have remained unimplemented due to lack of resources or government will (United Nations, 2012).

The budget initiative of GRB is adopted as one of the strategies that would bring about gender equality through the assessment of the budgets and tilting budgets to incorporate gender issues. The analysis of budgets from a gender perspective therefore means the assessment of the impact of government policies on men and women and their contribution to the economy as individuals. GRB initiative goes into the examination of how revenues are raised apart from the roles of various stakeholders in the whole process. The initiatives seek to enhance the understanding of how budget systems work and who benefits. The broad issue being, that of informing the policy on appropriate allocations to public expenditure (Sharp, et. al.1998; Elson, 2000).

Apart from the unfavorable patriarchal structures that run deep in the society, social-economic status, educational attainment, place of birth and place of residence is among the many other factors that contribute to the gender inequalities that exist in many sectors of the economy. They present themselves in various forms, putting women in subordinate positions that have been a cause of concern for researchers. Research is carried out to analyze the impact of public expenditure on men and women for identification of the areas that require redress to enable all citizens to access resources and enjoy the benefits of public expenditure without discrimination of any kind. The analysis helps in understanding the extent to which the National budget addresses the needs of the citizens.

The public's perception and opinion is useful in precipitating changes in the budget in a manner that would be beneficial to all. Therefore, the public requires sensitization of the understanding of the importance of government budgets for they directly affect their lives. All the stakeholders require proper understanding of public budgets not only to the individuals but also to the country's economy. A full analysis of budget priorities should be holistic thus considering the class, age, ethnicity and regional perspectives with adequate advocacy for effective utilization of the information obtained (Orodho, 2003, 2013).

GRB aims at bringing changes to the budgets making them inclusive in the way they address issues in particularly gender concerns. The whole idea is to include gender issue in all the stages of public finance expenditure with an intention of reprioritizing the government's expenditure from gender perspective. The tool is also used for impact analysis of the national budgets on men and women. It facilitates the evaluation of budgets' impact on men and women pinpointing on particular areas of discrimination from a social dimensions that require attention of the government for redress (Ziderman, et.al. 2009).

More often than not, the gender responsive budgets are mistaken to mean half should be spent on women while the other half on men. The advocates of GRB have come up with clarity of what gender budgeting is and is not (Schneider, 2006:14):

Gender responsive budgets are not separate for women, nor are they related to a 50/50 spending on women and men. Instead, Gender Responsive Budgets are national and local budgets of a government that are planned, approved, executed, monitored and audited in a gender-sensitive way in order to address the different

priorities and needs of both female and male citizens of a country and to ensure that policies of the Government benefit all population groups, and especially poor women and men, equitably.

This definition clearly shows that GRB is the integrations of gender concerns in policies and budgets. From the definition, GRB enables the adjustments of budgets for the promotion of gender equality. It therefore does not involve the separation of budgets into two i.e. for men and women but it simply tilts towards the disadvantaged to address the inequality aspects. We could also view it as, a process which is intentionally designed to facilitate gender sensitive formulation of government budgets (Sharp, 2003; Budlender, et.al. 2002).

The national budget reflects on how the government raises and spends public resources. It attempts to disaggregate the impact of the government's main stream budgets on men and women (Budlender, et.al. 2003). In order to formulate the gender sensitive budgets, there is need to mainstream gender dimensions in all the stages of the budget cycle and the public finance. Schneider identifies the various stages that would require gender sensitization in order to achieve the goal of having a budget that is gender sensitive for equality in both the benefits and burdens of the public resources (Schneider, 2006:33):

Formulating the budget in a gender-responsive way; Linking gender responsive policies with adequate budgetary funds; Linking policies to empower women and to fight against gender based violence with adequate budgetary funds; Executing the budget in a way that benefits women and men, girls and boys equitably; Monitoring the impact of expenditure and revenue raising from a gender perspective; and (re) prioritizing expenditure and (re)formulating revenue raising policies in a gender equitable way by taking the different needs and priorities of women and men, girls and boys into account.

Gender sensitive budgets differ from budgets that we may refer to gender "blind" in that gender blind budgets lack gender sensitivity. Gender neutral budgets may by default be gender sensitive but generally many governments, who claim to have gender neutral budgets, usually end up with budgets whose impact has adverse effects on either men or women. Although the budgets have adverse effect more often on women due to their subordinate positions in the society structured by who have power in their hands.

GRB exhibits the characters of treating every member of the house hold as a separate entity and the fact that their access to resources differ greatly despite being members of one household. Household members do differ in access to bargaining power, a fact that is acknowledged and catered for in the process of gender budgeting unlike other budgets which may not be gender sensitive despite appearing to be neutral from the surface. Empirical evidence reveals that spending patterns between men and women differ. Women tend to spend more on the families and children's welfare while men tend to spend more leisure. The spending pattern has implications on who should be targeted for public expenditure and whom the revenue raising predominantly falls on (Budlender et.al. 2004; Schneider, 2006).

World over, women are left with the responsibility of unpaid work which gender responsive budgeting takes into account having been left out by the systems of national accounting that have the responsibility of drawing up rules computing Gross Domestic Product (GDP) together with macroeconomic policy decisions:

The care economy therefore remains invisible, although it is of utmost importance for the functioning of the market economy and for the maintenance of the social framework of a society (Schneider, 2006:36).

Although gender responsive budgets are diverse, they do converge at one point and that is: finding out the impact of public resources on men and women. They are perceived as important socio-economic tools that emphasize on the importance of engendering public expenditure including expenditure on education to enable accessibility of educational facilities without discrimination (Schneider, 2006).

The GRB initiatives are one of the key tools for empowering women through allocation of resources to budgets to implement policies and programmes that do promote their affairs. They are a strong bridge that the gender inequalities that exist between women and men, and facilitate development by integrating gender issues into macroeconomic policy (ILO, 2006). To be specific gender responsive budget initiatives are mainly geared towards:

- Raising awareness among stakeholders about the non-neutral nature of budgets.
- Seeking to ensure greater accountability by governments to its commitments, such as achievement of gender equality.
- Changing the way in which budgets and policies are designed

The three gender budgeting goals are summarized diagrammatically in Figure 1 (Sharp, 2003:10):

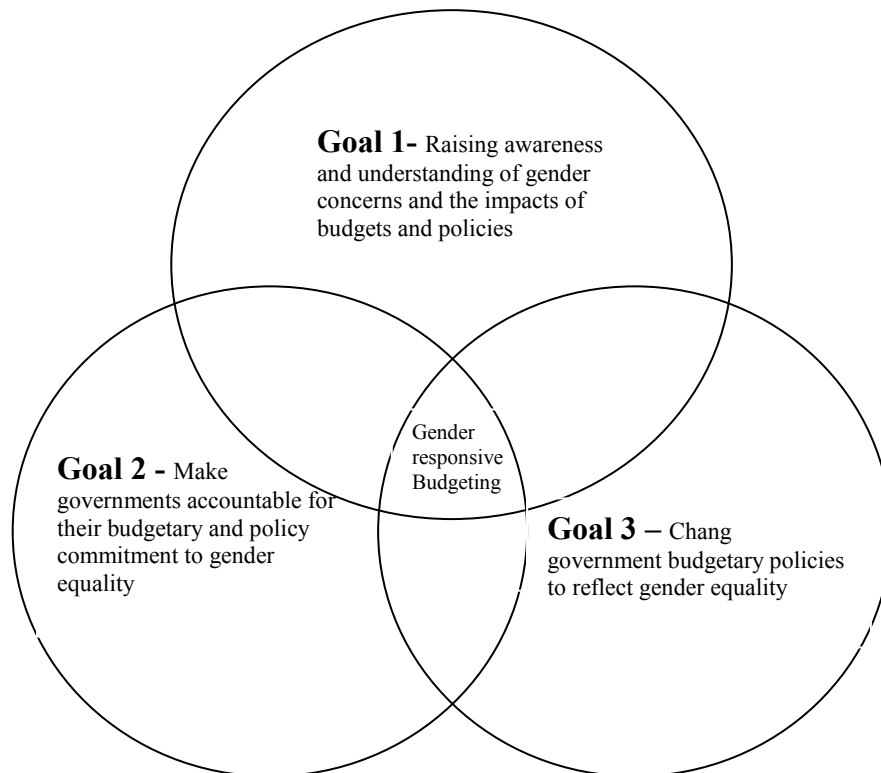


Figure 1: Gender Budgeting Goals

Most of the developing countries have not managed to attain all the three goals in total though have put strategies in place in attempt to. Corruption which is widely spread in sub-Saharan Africa due to Poor governance would not work for enhanced accountability and transparency for fear of exposure of their unjust ways of running the government.

According to UNESCO (2010), gender responsive budgeting is important for the following reasons:

- It helps to create understanding on, and illustrates the existence of inequality in budgetary impacts on women compared to men;
- It is a tool for increasing accountability and accelerating the implementation of commitments to gender equality and human rights;
- It is useful for increasing the efficiency of government budgets by allowing better informed financial resource allocations. If gender inequalities in budgetary impacts are not recognized, they could lead to losses in productivity, as well as declines in the quality of the labour force, economic growth, and health;
- It increases the effectiveness of both policies and programmes by assessing whether the stated objectives are achieved and
- It leads to transparency, accountability, predictability and participation in budget making.

GRB can be used to enforce human rights for it is a tool when well used increases accountability and accelerates government commitment to gender equality (Abwalaba, 2011). It could therefore increase the efficiency of government budgets by facilitating informed financial resource allocations. "Efficiency is one of the major reasons finance ministries undertake the GRB initiatives. The argument is vital for its role in extending the GRB analysis into economics and social policies" (Himmelweit, 2002).

It increases the effectiveness of both the programmes and policies by providing a method for assessment of the achievement of stated objectives (Sharp, et.al. 1990). Gender equity which aims at equitable budget allocations has been an important rationale for policy makers to GRB. It shows the existence of inequality in budgetary impacts on women or men if any since the specific areas where gender inequality occurs is identified. Good governance is yet another powerful strength of GRB. Governance refers to institutional context in which budgets and policies are composed. Good governance requires participatory approach to policy making process from various perspectives from various groups of citizens (Himmelweit, 2002).

There are three widely disseminated frameworks utilized by gender budget initiatives. First, there is the Commonwealth Secretariat pilot drawn from the Australian experience (Budlender & Sharp, 1998), Budlender's five step approach developed for the South African Women's Budget Initiative (2000) and budget cycle framework for examining the impact of budgetary activities, outlined in UNIFEM (2002b). The five steps approach is quite detailed although one should not be tied to it but adjust according to the country's needs ending

up with either more or less steps to be followed. These steps are as follows (Budlender, et.al. 2003:12):

- Describe the situation for girls and boys (and the different subgroups) in the education sector (Analyzing the situation of girls and boys);
- Analysis of how policies address the gendered nature of the situation (Assessing the gender-responsiveness of policies);
- Analysis of whether the assigned allocations are sufficient to implement gender responsive policy (Assessing budget allocations);
- Monitoring of expenditures and implementation of policies (Check whether the public expenditure was spent as intended) and finally;
- Assessing the impact of the policy and the expenditure and checking how it has contributed to the government's gender equity commitments (Assessing outcomes).

The above steps which are carefully designed starting from assessing the situation on the ground facilitating for a proper understanding of what is required before policies are designed may seem obvious although and more often than not the situation on the ground is not carefully accessed to reflect a true picture.

1.3 Statement of the Research Problem

Despite the fact that studies conducted in many developing countries have highlighted the importance of gender budgeting policies as instrumental to educational attainment, the situation in Kenya indicates that the government has not implemented these policies fully. The purpose of the study at hand is to critically assess the strategies that have been put in place for equitable accessibility to education due to the wide gender gap that exists in the education system in favour of boys. Education influences individuals' attitudes and widens their exposure to knowledge of norms and values, which enables critical evaluation of complex social situations including the deeply rooted patriarchal structures that perpetuate gender discrimination in access to educational resources (Schneider, et.al. 2011).

1.4. Objectives of the Study

The main study objective was to critically analyze stakeholders' perception regarding the factors that contribute to gender disadvantages in access to education in Kenya;

1.5 The theoretical Framework

Capability Approach (CA) was propounded by economist Sen (1980) and later developed significantly by philosopher Nussbaum (1988) after which a number of scholars continued to develop it. The approach has some traces of its aspect from Aristotle, Adam Smith and Karl Marx among others (Sen, 1980; Nussbaum, 1988).

The approach enables the assessment of the individuals' wellbeing and policies aimed at initiating social change in the society. It can also be used as an alternative evaluative tool for social cost- benefit analysis, or as a framework within which to design and evaluate policies, ranging from welfare state design in affluent societies, to development policies by governments and non-governmental organizations in developing countries (Robeyns, 2005). The capability approach has also provided the theoretical foundations of the human development paradigm (Fukuda-Parr, 2003; Fukuda-Parr, et.al 2003).

The approach is applicable in a wide range of fields including: the education sector for the evaluation of inequalities in access to educational opportunities; the evaluation of several aspects of life such as poverty; assessment of the wellbeing of groups or individuals; and evaluation of development policies initiated by both by governments and non-governmental organizations. It is the approach's interdisciplinary character that enables the focus on multidimensional aspects of what people are able to do and be puts it an advantage whereby researcher and scholars are able to utilize it in their scholarly work. Due to its flexibility to the study finds the approach suitable within which to situate its context (Robeyns, 2005, 2006).

According to the approach, development is perceived as freedom that allows citizens to pursue what they value. Sen (1999) argues that policy evaluation should focus on removal of obstacles to enable people live quality lives because the expansion of their capabilities is the main feature of development. Therefore, development must help create a society with certain basic qualities such as: Sufficiency, which refers to absence of want; Security which implies law and order, national defense and freedom from abuse from officialdom, employer and landlords among others; Satisfaction which makes life enjoyable that is sufficiency should be achieved but not at too high a cost in terms of the overall quality of life; It should be a society of growth and change and of individual opportunity to develop ones full potential (Sen, 1999; Robeyns, 2006).

Education fulfils the instrumental social role of facilitating the marginalized to be politically organized to pressurize the government for their rights in access to the deprived resources. The interpersonal effectiveness of education enable people to help others thus contributing to the social good required for democratic freedom The development of education expands human beings' freedoms while not having education hampers the choice of

living a full life which is harmful to human development. Education is vital for a democratic society and for women empowerment (Nussbaum, 1997, 2002; Sen, 1999). The gap between capabilities and functioning require effective strategies where the government has to intervene through policies and resource allocations. The policies in this case have to be gender sensitive to enable gender equitable outcomes. The capability approach extends the focus of gender budgeting to the analysis of the impact of policies on the wellbeing of women (Sen, 1985, 1999).

Capability approach has an advantage over human capital approach for it offers a method for evaluating the educational advantages as well as identification of the marginalized. The approach has an analytic distinction of viewing the “means” as instrumental to reach the goal of increased wellbeing while the “ends” such as justice and development have the intrinsic importance (Sen, 2007). Capability approach leads us to question whether valued capabilities are distributed fairly in and through education thus offering people equitable opportunities to convert their resources into capabilities. These questions require that crucial consideration of the importance Sen allocates to education in the process of the formation of human capabilities while keeping in mind the social capital factor for social development. This argument justifies the choice of this theoretical framework to undergird our study.

II. Research Design and Methodology

2.1. Research Design and Locale

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design (Orodho, 2012). The design was found appropriate for the study because it facilitated easier incidence of collection, interrelationship between collected variables and comparison (Orodho, Ampofo, Bizimana & Ndayambaje, 2016). Orodho, Khatete and Mugiraneza also contend that surveys aim at obtaining information which can be effectively and efficiently analyzed, generate expected patterns from extracted data and facilitate comparisons for the purpose of making informed decision making which could have strong implications on policy formulation. A whole range of educational problems can be investigated in survey research. The foregoing provides the justification of choosing the descriptive survey design for this study.

2.2. The Target Population and Sampling

The target population for this study were secondary school teachers and education officers in Kenya. Purposive sampling was used to draw 139 secondary school teachers and 17 education officers yielding a sample size of 156 as displayed in Table1.

Table 1 : The sample size from urban, rural and ASAL areas.

County of residence	Teachers	Education officers	Total
Urban	53	7	60
Rural	46	4	50
ASAL	40	6	46
Total	139	17	156

2.3. Research Instruments, Data collection and Analysis

The study utilized questionnaires for teachers and interview guides for education officers. The questionnaires were piloted among small identical samples not included in the main study to determine validity and reliability. Data were collected after receiving permit from the National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation ¹(NACOSTI). The sampled teachers were issued with the questionnaire and the researchers made appointments on when to collect the filled questionnaires. Interviews were also arranged for according to the time available by the respondents who were education officers. The interviews took a total of three weeks to accomplish.

Quantitative data from the questionnaires were analyzed with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for windows Computer program eversion 20.0 (Orodho, Ampofo, Bizimana& Ndayambaje,2016). The SPSS generated both descriptive and inferential statistics (Orodho, Khatete & Mugiraneza, 2016). The qualitative data from interview schedules were analyzed thematically (Orodho, Wenceslas, Odundo, Waweru & Ndayambaje, 2016).

III. Results and Discussions

3.1. Gender Responsive Budgeting Factors Nationally

The main objective was to find out from the main education stakeholders the main factors that cause gender disparity in students’ access and participation in all levels of education in Kenya. To achieve this objective, the 156 sampled subjects to participate in the study were requested to state at least 2 major factors that contributed to gender disparity in access and participation in education in Kenya. A critical examination of the data carried in Figure 2. Figure 2 indicate that the most commonly cited factor inhibiting education, reported by 26.19% of all

respondents, was the low premium attached to education by some communities. This was followed closely at second position by inadequate physical facilities as cited by 23.21% of the respondents. Household poverty and child-labour were placed at position three and four having been cited by 21.43 % and 17.26% of the respondents, respectively. The other prominent factor was a combination of socio-economic and cultural practices.

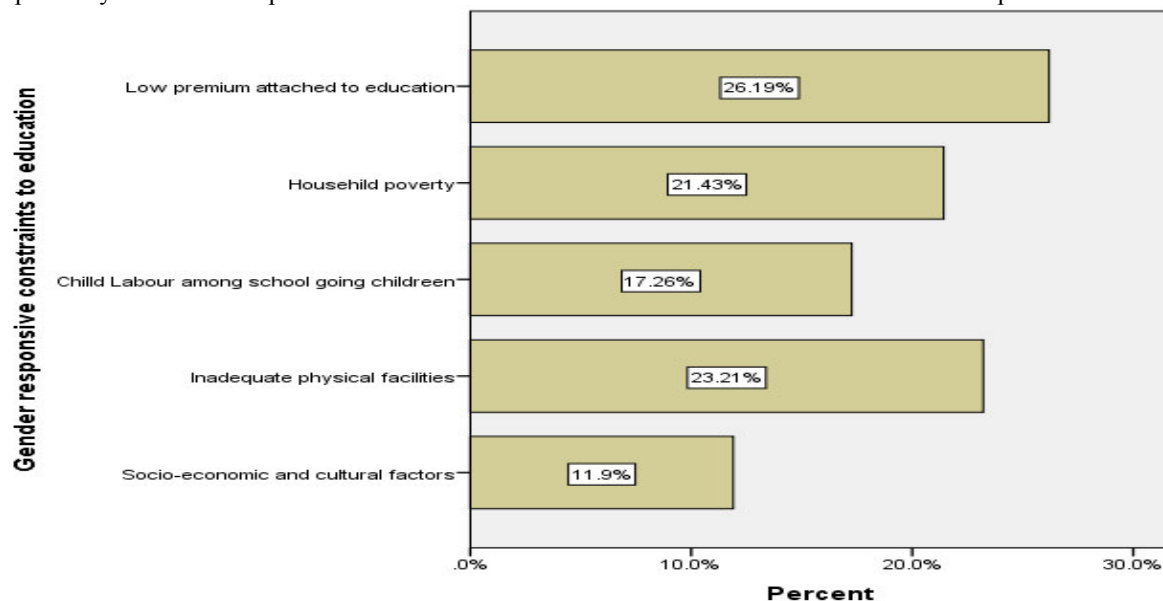


Figure 2: Gender responsive factors constraining education

Further examination of responses displayed in Figure 1 indicate that most of the cited factors cited by key stakeholder were of school based and household nature. Interventions into these factors will need to take a school –based and house-hold approach.

3.2. Gender responsive Budgeting factors regionally

The factors in Table 2 were further analyzed focusing on the geographical variations. The results indicate that retrogressive cultural practices and beliefs were spread and more prevalent in most of the rural counties. Out of the total number that indicated retrogressive cultural practices and beliefs to be a major problem, 59.3% were from rural, followed by the ASAL areas with 33.3% and last 7.4% in urban areas.

Table 2: Factors that contribute to Participation inequality in Education (geographical variations)

Factors causing gender disparity in access and participation in education	Urban		Rural		ASAL		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	NO.	%
Retrogressive cultural practices and beliefs	4	7.4	30	59.3	15	33	49	100
Inadequate physical and human resources	0	0	50	100	00	00	50	100
Child labour	5	9.1	32	63.63	13	27.27	50	100
Poverty Levels	7	11.1	28	55.6	15	33.33	50	100
Lack of premium attached to education	00	0	25	50	23	50	48	100
Total responses	16		142	-	89	-	247	

The other factor which was more prevalent in the rural areas was child labour. Out of the total number that indicated child labour to be one of the major factors that contributed to gender disparity participation in education, 63.6%, was from rural counties, 27.27% was from rural and 9.1% from urban region. This means the rural is most affected by the problem of child labour and retrogressive cultural practices and beliefs coupled with poverty levels with more than half of the rural respondents citing this factor. It was also interesting to note that the factors of inadequate physical and human resources was a preserve of rural areas with all respondents who cited the factor residing in rural areas. The factors that seemed to be confined to the urban areas although to a very minimal extent were; poverty levels, child labor and retrogressive cultural practices and beliefs which were cited as 11.1%. 9.1 % and 7.4 %, respectively.

In the ASAL areas, the factors that were perceived to be critical in causing gender disparity were

predominantly low of premium attached to education, retrogressive cultural practices and child labour which is directly linked to poverty levels. On the whole, these factors could be summarized as being largely of a socio-economic and cultural nature with cultural beliefs, lack of premium attached to education and poverty taking center stage.

Discussion

Although child labour is illegal in Kenya, it is still practiced as evidence from the data collected reveals unlike in the civilized world where it is practically extinct. Parents are not obliged to send their children to schools. Not all parents seeking education for their children actually get it free in true sense of the term. Even when direct costs of participating in education are brought to zero, the opportunity costs to parents can be quite substantial especially to poor parents. In the Gender policy in Education document of 2007, Child labour is one of the concerns of the government. One of the strategies to deal with this was to introduce programmes for prevention of child labour which has largely remained paper work with no tangible results.

Sweeping statements such as “why should the government not force poor parents to take their children to schools?” or “Children are an economic asset to the poor” are often heard. Khadria, (1995) raises important questions as to : Why the government cannot “reward” poor parents for sending their children to school rather than penalize them; why the government cannot transform the “economic asset “ of the poor parents into more productive asset of the society and the nation through education and schooling particularly when competitive advantage of nations depends on the human capital endowments and social returns to education and yet social returns to education are supposed to be much higher than private returns (Psacharopoulos, 1985).

Answers to these questions would have important implications for policies for policies on allocation of resources for basic education. The issues to be addressed in the formulation of specific policy measures are: Determinants of the behaviour of the rational of poor parents in procuring child education; government option in universal distribution of primary education in terms of a choice between specific egalitarianism and general egalitarianism, two processes of transforming private assets into societal assets.

It is argued that individuals with higher incomes tend to demand and purchase more and better schooling for their children (Nyangia & Orodho, 2015; Orodho, 2014; Mwinyipembe & Orodho, 2014). If this is accepted then the standard consumption behaviour of the poor will appropriately fit their demand behaviour for their children’s primary education. Ranking of the education in general in the consumption basket of the poor needs no elaboration. Engel’s Law on expenditure patterns at different income levels would support the proposition that education would have a low priority as compared to food and housing (Ampofo & Orodho, 2014).

It is simpler to handle an adult education case where the individual makes a decision to invest in education knowing very well what he/she has to forego in the labour market in terms of the cost of his or her time than a poor parent’s child (Orodho, Waweru & Getange, 2014). When it comes to a poor parent’s child’s primary education, complexity arises because of the possible or expected earnings or savings that accrue to the parent from the child’s participation in the labour market force (Mergos, 1992; Khadria, 1995). This has two complex dimensions: First, that of labour being harmful to the physical and mental development of children and therefore their future productivity, thereby creating more deprivation and inequalities in society in future; Second, that of foregone liquidity of a child’s current income by the parents when the child attends a school. The two complex dimensions lead to emergency of a dilemma.

While the first is neither obvious nor visible to the poor parents due to being myopia (short time - horizons) and ignorance of possible outcomes of child labour in terms of displacement of adult labour force, the second gives rise to opportunity cost, the relative dimension of which it might be forbidding. While the first leads to the question of societal goal and governmental intervention, the second calls for a discussion of ways and means of handling the opportunity cost i.e. of minimizing it to the parents. Perhaps one of the most suitable strategies could target the supply side of the child labour market where the government intervenes by offering long term collateral free micro credit to parents for subsistence consumption in exchange for their commitment to sending their children to schools ((Ampofo & Orodho, 2014; Khadria, 1995).

The link between poverty and education is intricate. In the available documents in Kenya, the Republic of Kenya (2012) indicates that the non-poor have higher literacy levels of 88.5 percent compared to 71.8 percent for the poor. Generally, male are more literate amongst both the non-poor and poor population. In addition, urban dwellers are relatively more literate than their counterparts in rural areas. Regionally, North Eastern stands out among the rural dwellers with the lowest rates of literacy for all groups across Kenya and between the sexes. Conversely, Central Province has the highest literacy rates in the rural areas for both the poor and no poor. In urban areas, Nairobi depicts the highest literacy levels, for both sexes and poverty groups (Republic of Kenya, 2008:260).

From the research perspectives, Orodho (2013) documents that one of the critical factors causing pupils’ low enrolment and participation in education was the household poverty level. The study found that

about 46.3 percent, 37.8 percent and 44.0 percent of the respondents in the ASAL, rural medium agricultural and urban areas respectively, ranked household poverty as the second most critical factor hindering pupils access and participation in education.

There was a significant association among households across the regions regarding the impact of rising poverty levels on education ($X^2 = 53.17$; $df=27$, $p < .05$) with the ASAL regions experiencing more negative impact. Relating this finding with the national statics, it is evident that in the entire scenario, the females are more affected by the negative impact of poverty on education than their male counterparts supporting the findings of the current study. The results of the interview transcription indicated that the main retrogressive factors were:

- Female genital mutilation (FGM) which was responsible for more females than males to drop out of school especially at the adolescent stage when the practice is performed especially among the pastoralist and some other rural communities.
- Forced early marriages of girls to elderly but rich men; a practice fueled by a state of poverty at the household level.
- In the pastoral communities, the parents, especially of Muslim origin tended to favor the Dukisi¹ education system as opposed to the secular primary and secondary education.

The finding is consistent with the findings of Orodho (2003:67-68) which show that retrogressive cultural practices which includes forced marriages to elderly and influential and rich people, initiation, particularly genital mutilation (FGM), and parental preference to Dukisi and Madrassa to secular primary and secondary education among some Muslim communities. Orodho (2003:68) further noted that there was no law protecting the girl from the influence of these practices. Similarly, of relevance to this study, Orodho (2003:68) established that there was a significant association between the impact of socio-cultural practices ($X^2=58.34$, $df=27$, $p < .05$) and students enrolment and participation, with the ASAL areas experiencing the most negative impact.

The finding on the impact of child labour and students' academic performance has also been highlighted by Njeru and Orodho (2003) as well as Orodho (2003, 2014). For example, Orodho (2003:68) and later in 2015, documents that in the low urban and rural areas, children are usually withdrawn from school in order to help in domestic chores or participate in petty or precarious trading enterprises. It was evident that the trend of child prostitution and child labour was becoming a major issue of concern and was being perpetuated by high poverty among households. It was also noted in the current study that child labour affected both males and females although the females were more hard hit. The major attractions of child labor were found to include:

- Fishing communities where the males did the fishing and females performed the trading/ sale as well as entertaining the fisher men.
- Rice growing areas which attracted mainly the females in the growing and rice preparation.
- Coffee and Miraa¹ growing areas which attracted both gender in equal proportions.

With regards to low premium attached to education among some households especially among the ASAL communities, it is clear from the emerging literature that parents' and teachers' negative attitude towards the learners, particularly among the girls, lack of students interest and appropriate motivation and lack of adequate classrooms had a profound impact on the education of girls in such communities in which these practices were more prevalent (Njeru & Orodho, 2003; Orodho, 2003; 2015).

IV. Conclusions and Recommendations

The results indicated the factors were largely of socio-economic, cultural as well as school based. The single most critical factor cited by nearly half of the respondents perceived to cause gender disparity was retrogressive cultural practices and beliefs. The second factor that was child labour, closely followed by high poverty prevalence at household level. The other factors that were perceived to be equally contributory were inadequate physical and human resources in schools and the low premium attached to education. These lead us to the conclusion that despite the efforts made we could conclude that GRB initiatives have probably produced relatively very few budget changes. What is probably obvious is the fact that in all the countries identified for the case study, the main success has been raising awareness about gender issues. It is however an important first step in moving towards changing policy priorities and budgets although more needs to be done to realize the

¹ Miraa which is commonly referred to as Khat plays a critical role in the earning of substantial income despite the negative impact the drug has on its users. The socio-economic destruction of lives and livelihoods resulting from Khat use, far outweighs the perceived economic and the concerns of the farmers in the Miraa growing counties who can diversify to horticulture farming. Miraa is indeed a drug as rightly classified by World Health Organization since 1989. The social negative consequences include high divorce rates, prostitution, neglect of family and children especially in provision of education, low self-esteem and under-achieving among the persons addicted to Miraa. Another noted concern has been the way the use of Miraa contributes to theft by its users in search of money to satisfy their craving. Miraa aids tooth decay, lack of appetite and insomnia leading to psychosis, irritability and violence.

GRB goals in full.

From the results and conclusions, the following recommendations were made:

First, the concept of GRB is yet to gain acceptability among the Kenyan policy makers as well as politicians. It therefore recommended that:

1. Efforts are required towards changing the attitude of the communities as well as key policy makers through concerted advocacy and sensitization campaigns to create awareness. The policy makers, members of parliament, officers in charge of ministry budgets, civil society and all stakeholders require inductive gender responsive programmes offered through short courses on GRB, conferences, seminars and workshops for them to be well grounded in gender issues that affect and are affected by the budgets.
2. The education of affirmative action should be integrated in the school curriculum the same way peace education, HIV and AIDS were integrated. Awareness would be raised to greater heights which would reduce the usual conflicts between men and women misunderstand affirmative action to imply war or some form of conflict between them.

Secondly, the study establishes an overall picture indicating that gender responsive budgeting (GRB) could easily find space in the currently devolved government in Kenya. The county governments could be used as conduits to amicably resolving the problems through practical budgetary allocations where parliamentarians could make a strong case for more specific GRB in Kenya. It is thus recommended that:

1. The devolved government at county levels could be used to dismantle the socioeconomic and cultural barriers existing in their respective counties.
2. Parliamentarians and members of the civil society need strategies as a matter of urgency i.e. effective gender responsive budgeting that could reduce the gender inequalities noted in the education sector detrimental to the development of individuals and society as a whole.
3. Gender budgets have not yet fulfilled their potential especially bridging the gap between undertaking gender sensitive analyses and formulating gender sensitive budget. We argue that GRB initiatives have been limited in achieving both accountability and changes to policies due to lack of resources and the political will.

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